

National Aeronautics and Space Administration



Headquarters

Washington, DC 20546-0001

May 10, 2019

Office of Communications

Mackenzie Farkus
MuckRock News
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REF: 19-HQ-F-00500

Dear Mr. or Mrs. Farkus:

This is in response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request dated May 5, 2019, and received at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Headquarters FOIA Office on May 6, 2019. Your request was assigned FOIA Case Number 19-HQ-F-00500 and was for:

All materials on the Tektite I and II habitats and program(s), which lasted from the late 1960s to the early 1970S. Materials could include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Planning materials, such as habitat structure/architecture schematics, hiring papers~ or similar records
- Any policy directives, guidance documents, memorandum, training materials, or similar records.
- correspondence with U.S. government officials about Tektite I and II research outcomes.
- Promotional materials, such as press releases, photos, and videos.

After a careful review of your FOIA Request, NASA is unable to process this request as crafted. FOIA provides that "each agency, upon any request for records which (i) reasonably describes such records and (ii) is made in accordance with published rules stating the time, place, fees (if any), and procedures to be followed, shall make the records promptly available to any person." 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(3)(A). Records are

reasonably described if the description "enable[s] a professional employee of the agency who was familiar *with the subject area of the request* to locate the record with a reasonable amount of effort." *Marks v. United States*, 578 F.2d 261, 263 (9th Cir. 1978). Courts have held that agencies are not required to conduct wide-ranging, unreasonably burdensome searches for records; therefore, "broad, sweeping requests lacking specificity are not permissible." See also *Exxon Mobil Corp. v. U.S. Dep't of Interior*, No. 09-6732, 2010 WL 2653353, at *8 (E.D. La June 29, 2010) (finding requests for "any and all documents," "any documents," or "all documents" impermissibly broad).

Based on my review of the description of the records you are seeking, I find that your request does not reasonably describe the records you are seeking under the above standards and would result in an unduly burdensome search. A FOIA requester should provide enough details about the specific records he/she seeks so that the records can be located with a reasonable amount of effort. This includes information on the type of document, title, subject area, date of creation if known, original source of the record, or other relevant details. It is important to be as specific as possible about what documents should be searched for and in what locations (i.e. particular NASA Center, names of the officials who you believe may have the information), Contract Number(s) (which will tell us which center will conduct the search for the requested records), the time frame (for what year(s), and the program office(s) that may have created the requested records. If you do not have details about specific records, provide enough event-related information, such as the date and circumstance surrounding the event the record covers, to facilitate the conduct of an organized, non-random search for the requested records.

We are unable to conduct a search for, "All materials on the Tektite I and II habitats and program(s), which lasted from the late 1960s to the early 1970S," throughout all of NASA for any reference to the search terms you provided this will require a lengthy and burdensome search. However, we are providing you with a web link that may aid you with your research:

www.ntrs.nasa.gov

<https://ntrs.nasa.gov/archive/nasa/casi.ntrs.nasa.gov/19720007419.pdf>.

<https://history.nasa.gov/>

We ask that you narrow the scope of your request and time frame of your request, by providing specific document requests, specific timeframes, and the person or NASA Center(s), you believe maintains the records you are seeking. Providing us with the requested information, will allow us to conduct a non-random, reasonable search for responsive records. Please review our FOIA regulation, which can be found at: <https://www.nasa.gov/FOIA/guidance.html>.

If you have further questions, please feel free to contact me at hq-foia@nasa.gov or (202) 358-2462.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Josephine Sibley".

Josephine Sibley
Headquarters
FOIA Public Liaison Officer